

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 020929
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APPROVED BY S - PTARNOFF

S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 020929

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CHEROKEE, EYES ONLY FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO BREZHNEV

THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV WAS
DELIVERED TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY ON JANUARY 26, 1977
FROM THE PRESIDENT:

BEGIN TEXT.

AS I TAKE UP MY DUTIES AS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU MY VIEW ON RELATIONS BETWEEN
OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

I WANT TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION FOR THE INFORMAL
MESSAGES I HAVE RECEIVED FROM YOU AND IN THIS CONNECTION
I WANT TO AFFIRM THAT IT IS MY GOAL TO IMPROVE RELATIONS
WITH THE SOVIET UNION ON THE BASIS OF RECIPROCITY.

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MUTUAL RESPECT AND BENEFIT. THAT GOAL WILL HAVE MY CLOSE
PERSONAL ATTENTION, AS WELL AS THAT OF SECRETARY OF
STATE VANCE.

I HAVE READ YOUR PUBLIC REMARKS WITH GREAT INTEREST, AND
THEY ENCOURAGE ME TO BELIEVE THAT WE SHARE A COMMON DESIRE
TO ENHANCE AND PRESERVE THE PROSPECT OF LASTING PEACE.

AS I UNDERSTOOD YOUR VERY IMPORTANT SPEECH AT TULA, THE SOVIET UNION WILL NOT SEEK SUPERIORITY IN ARMS, WILL OPPOSE THE CONCEPT, AND WILL REQUIRE ONLY A DEFENSE SUFFICIENT TO DETER ANY POTENTIAL ADVERSARY. THE UNITED STATES SEEKS NOTHING MORE OR LESS FOR ITSELF. WITH PERSISTENCE AND WISDOM THEREFORE OUR TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD BE IN A POSITION TO AVOID A NEW ARMAMENTS RACE. I HAVE SAID TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT MY FIRM GOAL IS TO ELIMINATE ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

THERE ARE THREE AREAS WHERE PROGRESS CAN BE MADE TOWARD THIS GOAL. A CRITICAL FIRST STEP SHOULD BE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A SALT II AGREEMENT WITHOUT DELAY, AND AN AGREEMENT TO PROCEED TOWARD ADDITIONAL LIMITATIONS AND REDUCTIONS IN STRATEGIC WEAPONS. MOREOVER, I HOPE WE CAN PROMPTLY CONCLUDE AN ADEQUATELY VERIFIED COMPREHENSIVE BAN ON ALL NUCLEAR TESTS, AND ALSO STRIVE TO ACHIEVE GREATER OPENNESS ABOUT OUR RESPECTIVE STRATEGIC POLICIES. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO RENEW EFFORTS FOR PROGRESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR A BALANCED REDUCTION OF FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

WE ALSO HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO PURSUE POLICIES THAT WILL PREVENT THE TROUBLED AREAS OF THE WORLD FROM EXPLODING INTO DANGEROUS CONFLICTS. THE UNITED STATES WILL WORK TO PROMOTE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST ON THE BASIS OF APPROPRIATE UN RESOLUTIONS. SIMILARLY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WE ARE ENCOURAGING ALL PARTIES TO NEGOTIATE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT WHICH PROMOTES SECURITY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.

IT IS MY BELIEF THAT THE USSR CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE REALIZATION OF PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE IN BOTH OF THESE CRITICAL AREAS.

MY ADMINISTRATION ATTACHES IMPORTANCE TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF OUR BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS, ON THE BASIS OF MUTUAL AND EQUIVALENT BENEFITS TO THE PEOPLES OF BOTH OUR GREAT COUNTRIES. AT THE SAME TIME WE CANNOT BE INDIFFERENT TO THE FATE OF FREEDOM AND INDIVIDUAL HUMAN RIGHTS.

WE REPRESENT DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEMS AND OUR NATIONS ARE DIFFERENT IN BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE. COMPETITION OVER IDEALS AND IDEAS IS INEVITABLE BETWEEN OUR SOCIETIES. BUT IT NEED NOT PREVENT A COMMON EFFORT TO SHAPE A WORLD THAT IS MORE PEACEFUL, JUST AND HUMANE. WE LIVE IN A

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WORLD THAT INCREASINGLY REQUIRES COLLECTIVE RESPONSES
TO BASIC HUMAN PROBLEMS, AND MY HOPE IS THAT OUR COUNTRIES
CAN COOPERATE MORE CLOSELY IN ORDER TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT,
BETTER NUTRITION, AND A MORE MEANINGFUL LIFE FOR THE LESS
FORTUNATE PORTIONS OF MANKIND.

I LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU AND TO DISCUSSING WITH YOU
BOTH OUR DIFFERENCES AS WELL AS OUR COMMON INTERESTS.
MEANWHILE I PROPOSE THAT WE BOTH DO ALL THAT WE CAN TO
FURTHER THE PROGRESS OF IMPROVING US-SOVIET RELATIONS. I
HAVE ASKED SECRETARY VANCE TO PREPARE TO MEET WITH YOU,
IF YOU WISH, IN THE SPRING TO REVIEW THE PROGRESS BEING
MADE, TO DISCUSS KEY ISSUES WHICH ARE OUTSTANDING. AT
THAT TIME WE WILL WANT TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON A SUBSEQUENT

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MEETING BETWEEN YOU AND ME.

ANY SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS YOU MAY WISH TO COMMUNICATE TO
ME ON THESE OR ANY OTHER ISSUES WILL BE WELCOMED AND
CAREFULLY STUDIED.

WITH BEST PERSONAL REGARDS.

END TEXT.
VANCE

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